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constantly addressing my prayers to the Almighty for your felicity, &c. &c.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

Translation of the Ninth Satire of Boileau.

THIS Satire is perfectly in the taste of Horace, and is by far the most powerful of any which have yet been presented to our readers. Modern literature perhaps possesses nothing comparable to it ; for though Byron's Satire has equal severity of invective, and occasionally the same force of antithesis, yet it is destitute of that wonderful ingenuity of plan, which is almost peculiar to the productions of the author before us. Under the pretext of censuring his own faults, M. Boileau here adroitly exposes to ridicule a crowd of authors, who had coarsely expressed their indignation at being attacked in his former Satires. From beginning to end, he carries on a sharp dialogue with his own mind, and in the midst of their mutual reproaches, repartees, and rejoinders, some how or other, every body else fares worse than the angry disputants themselves.¹

Look ye, my mind ! a lecture I *must* read,
Your faults I'll bear no more—I won't indeed !
Too long already has my bending will
Allow'd your tricks and insolence their fill ;
But since you've push'd my patience to the last,
Have at you now ! I'll blow a wholesome blast.

Why what ! to see you in that ethic mood,
Like Cato, prating about bad and good,
Judging who writes with merit, and who not,
And teaching reverend doctors what is what,
One would suppose, that covered over quite
With darts of Satire ready wing'd for flight,

¹ After writing the above introduction, we found in the Geneva quarto edition of 1716, the following encomium, which, while it justifies, at the same time far transcends our own.

“ This Satire is without contradiction the finest of the whole, and exceeds all the others for art, invention, and finesse. In one word, we may boldly put it in competition with, and perhaps even in preference to every thing of the most perfect in its kind, with which antiquity has furnished us.”

To you the sole prerogative was given,
 To hector every mortal under heaven.
 But have a care—with all that high pretence,
I know the worth of both your wit and sense.
 All your defects, in all their black amount,
 As easy as my fingers I can count.
 Ready I am to burst with laughter—when
 I see you snatch your weak and sterile pen,
 And with that censor-air, sit sternly down,
 To wield the scorpion and reform the town;
 More rough and biting in your satires far
 Than angry scolds, or Gautier² at the bar.

But come—a moment's parley let us hold,
 Say whence you got that freak so madly bold?
 How *could* you dare attempt in verse to shine,
 Without one glance of favour from the Nine?
 Say, if on you those inspirations roll,
 Which stir the waters of the godlike soul?
 Tell how that rash fool-hardy spirit grew—
 Has Phoebus made Parnassus plain for you?
 And have you yet the dreadful truth to learn
 That on that mount, where sacred splendours burn,
 He who comes short of its remotest height,
 Falls to the ground in ignominious plight,
 And severed far from Horace and Voiture,
 Crawls round the bottom—with the Abbé Pure?³

Yet still, if all that I can do or say,
 Can neither frighten nor persuade away
 The dire approaches of that villain-sprite,
 Which tempts your sad infirmity—to write—
 Why make your scribbling then a gainful thing,
⁴And chaunt the glories of our conqueror-king;
 So shall your whims and follies swell your purse,
 And every year shall fructify your verse,
 While by your thriving Muse is duly sold
 An ounce of smoke, for full its weight in gold.

² Claude Gautier, a famous advocate, and excessively biting in his re-
 criminations. Hence he obtained the nickname of The Scold. When a
 pleader wished to intimidate his opponent, he used to say, "I'll let Gau-
 tier loose upon you."

³ To account, once for all, for the unrelenting severity, with which this
 person is hunted by our author, let it be observed, that the Abbé de Pure
 had circulated some black and unprovoked calumnies against Boileau,
 which deserved no less than the retaliation they received.

⁴ The successes of Louis XIV, called forth a swarm of inferior poets,
 who sought that celebrity from their theme, which they never could gain
 of themselves.

' Ah tempt me not, I hear you thus reply,
 In vain such splendid tasks my hand shall try.
 It is not every dabbler that can strike
 So high a chord, and thunder, Orpheus-like ;
 Not every one can fill the glowing page,
 With scenes, where Discord swells and bursts with rage,
 Where hot Bellona, thundering, shrieking, calls,
 ' And frightened Belgium shrinks behind her walls,
 On such high themes, without a throb of fear,
 ' Racan may chaunt—since Homer is not here.
 But lack-a-day ! for me and poor Cotin,⁷
 Who rhyme by chance, and plunge through thick and thin,
 We, who turn'd poets only on the plan
 Of meanly finding all the fault we can,
 By crouds of schoolboys through our praise is sung,
 Our *safest* way we find—to hold our tongue.
 Strains, worthy of a flatterer and a dunce
 Degrade both author and the king at once.
 In short, for me such subjects are the worst—
 My capabilities they sure would burst.'
 ' Tis thus, my mind, you lazily affect
 The outward semblance of a chaste respect,
 While dark malignity, that pois'nous sin,
 Broods, rankling, with a double pow'r within.
 But grant, that if you sung such high-wrought things,
 The lofty flight would melt your vent'rous wings,
 Were it not better and far nobler, say,
 Among the clouds to throw your life away,

⁵ The king had just taken Lisle, and made himself, in the same campaign, master of several other cities in Flanders.

⁶ This compliment is either too high, or posterity is very unjust to this French Homer. Racan however was "un Poete estimé"

⁷ The reader may remember, that in the third Satire, the author expresses his fondness of good accommodation at the dinner-table, by declaring that he wished for

As much elbow room to indulge himself in,
 As Cassagne had at church, or the Abbé Cotin.

Cassagne had the good sense to testify no resentment against the author. Not so with Cotin. He could not endure that his pulpit talents should be contested. In order to have his revenge, he wrote a bad Satire against Boileau, in which he reproaches him, as if it were a great crime, for having imitated Horace and Juvenal. He also published an essay on the Satires of the times, in which he charged our author with having done the greatest injuries, and imputed to him imaginary crimes. This only provoked a new tissue of raileries, of which the above is one, and Molière being made a party in the game, the reputation of Cotin at length sunk under the contest.

Than thus to sally on the king's high road,
And slash about in that unchristian mood,
Rhyming and scoffing, as you daily do,
Insulting those, who never speak to you,
Rashly endang'ring others and yourself,
And all to load your publisher with pelf?

Perhaps you think, puff'd up with senseless pride,
To march with deathless Horace, side by side.
Ev'n now you hope, that on your rhymes obscure
Future Saumaises will the rack endure.
But think what numbers well receiv'd at first,
Have had their foolish expectations curst!
How many flourish for a little date,
Who see their pack'd-up verses sold by weight!
To day, your writings, gathering wide renown,
From hand to hand spread briskly through the town;
A few months hence, despite their matchless worth,
Powder'd with dust, and never nam'd on earth,
They to the grocer's swell that solemn train,
Led on by Serré.⁹ and by Neuf-Germain,¹⁰
Or, at Port-Neuf¹¹ perhaps, all gnaw'd about,
Lie with their leaves defac'd and half torn out.
Ah! the fine thing, to see your works engage
A loit'ring lacquey, or an idle page,
Or make, perchance, convey'd to some dark nook,
A second volume to Savoyard's book.¹²

Should fate allow, by some goodnatur'd whim,
Your verses on the stream of time to swim,
Fulfilling, centuries hence, your spiteful vow,
To load with hisses poor Cotin, as now—
Of what avail will be the future praise
Which men may lavish in those distant days,
If in your life-time now that trick of rhyme
Blacken your conscience with repeated crime?
Where is the use to scare the publick so?
Why will you make each sorry fool your foe?

⁸ Claude Saumaise, an excellent critick and commentator.

⁹ This is that miserable writer, of whom, in the third Satire, the country nobleman exclaims,

“La Serré's the author of authors for me!”

¹⁰ Neuf-Germain is described as a ridiculous and extravagant poet.

¹¹ This was a place in Paris, where books were exposed to sale as waste paper.

¹² Savoyard used to sing songs about the streets of Paris, and at length he must publish his “New Collection of the Songs of Savoyard, as sung by himself at Paris!”

Why draw down many a secret hearty curse,
Merely to show your talent at a verse?

What demon tempts you to the vain display
Of proving out how well you can inveigh?

You read a book—and if it does not strike,

Who forces you to publish your dislike?

Pray let a dunce in quiet meet his lot—

Shall not an author unmolested rot?

¹³ *Jonas*, in dust, lies wither'd from our sight,

David, though printed, has not seen the light;

¹⁴ *Moses* is stain'd with right Mosaick mould

Along the margin of each musty fold.

How can *they* harm? those who are dead are dead;

Shall not the tomb escape your hostile tread?

What poison have they pour'd within your cup,

That you should rake their slumbering ashes up,

¹⁵ Perrin, and Bardin, Pelletiere, Hainaut,

Titreville, Coltet, Pradon, and Quinaut,

Whose names forever to some rhyme you hitch,

Like staring image in sepulchral niche?

You say you hate the nonsense they produce,

And that you're wearied out—a fine excuse!

Have they not wearied out both court and king?

Yet who indictments has presum'd to bring?

Has the least edict, to avenge their crime,

Silenc'd the authors, or suppress'd the rhyme?

Let write, who will. All at this trade may lose

Freely what paper and what ink they choose.

¹⁶ Let a romance, whose volumes number ten,

Dismiss its hero—heaven alone knows when—

Yet who can charge it with a single flaw

Against the statute or the common law?

¹³ The three poems, over which a requiem is sung in these three lines, were all the productions of different authors, and never had one breeze of success.

¹⁴ The line in the original is,

“*La Moïse commence à moisir par les bords.*”

Since the pun could not be exactly translated, we have ventured to supply its place with an inferior one, together with a reinforcement of alliterations.

¹⁵ Indifferent poets, who had at various times incurred the humour of our author in his satires.

¹⁶ The romances of *Cyrus*, *Clelia*, and *Pharamond* each extended to ten volumes.

Hence to this wild impunity we owe
 Those tides of authors which forever flow,
 Whose annual swell has never ceas'd to drown,
 Time out of mind, this trash-devoted town.
 Hence not a single gate-post guards a door,
 With puff-advertisements not smother'd o'er.
 Fastidious spirit! and will you alone
 Without prerogative, with name unknown,
 Presume to vindicate Apollo's cause,
 Adjust his realm, and execute his laws?

But whilst their works thus roughly you chastise,
 Will *yours* be view'd with quite indulgent eyes?
 No living thing escapes your rude attack,
 Think you no blow of vengeance shall come back?
 Ah yes, e'en now methinks some injur'd wright
 Exclaims, "Keep out of that mad critic's sight.
 "One cannot tell what often ails his brain—
 "A paradox—no shrewdness can explain—
 "A very boy—an inexperienced fool,
 "Who rashly grasps at universal rule;
 "Who for a pair of well-turn'd verses' ends,
 "Would run the risk of losing twenty friends.
 "He gives no quarter to the godlike Maid,
 "And wants his will by all the world obey'd.
 "Is there a faultless pleader at the bar,
 "¹⁷ Whose eloquence he does not mock and mar?
 "Is there a preacher, brilliant, chaste, and deep,
 "At whose discourse he does not go to sleep?
 "And who is this Parnassian monarch-lad?
 "A beggar, in the spoils of Horace clad!
 "¹⁸ Did not one Juvenal, before him, teach
 "How few attend Cotin, to hear him preach?
 "¹⁹ Those poets both wrote satires upon rhyme,
 "And how he fathers upon them his crime!

¹⁷ Our author possessed in a very perfect degree the talent of mimicry. Being a young advocate, his attendance at the courts of justice enabled him to catch the tone and manners of the pleaders there. He was no less an annoyance to all preachers, and all play-actors.

¹⁸ This is the most piercing thrust in the whole Satire. Saint Pavin and the Abbé Cotin, had charged our author with stealing from Horace and Juvenal. The objection was very impertinent, but by making Juvenal talk about the Abbé Cotin, who lived sixteen or seventeen centuries after him, it fell back with tremendous force on the heads of its authors.

¹⁹ It is necessary to remind the mere English reader, that neither Horace nor Juvenal, nor any Latin poet before the dark ages knew any thing of rhyme.

"Behind their glorious names he hides his head ;
 "'Tis true, those authors I have little read ;
 "But this I know, the world would get much good,
 "If all that slanderous, satirick brood,
 "Into the river, (and 'twould be but fair)
 "Were headlong plung'd, to make their verses there."
 See how they treat you, and the world astound ;
 And the world deems you as already drown'd.
 In vain will some good-natur'd friend essay
 To beg for grace, and wipe your doom away.
 Nothing can satisfy the jealous wight,
 Who reads, and trembles as he reads, in fright,
 Thinks that each shaft is aim'd at him alone,
 Believing every fault you paint, his own.

You're always meddling with some new affair,
 Picking eternal quarrels here and there.
 Why are my ears so frequently assail'd
 With cries of authors and of fools impal'd ?
 When will your zeal some due cessation find ?
 Come now—I'm serious—answer me, my mind !
 'My stars !' you answer, 'what a mighty fuss !'
 Why do you let your spleen transport you thus ?
 Must I be hung, for having given once
 Or twice, a passing comment on a dunce ?
 Where is the man, who, when a coxcomb brags,
 Of having written a mere piece of rags,
 Does not exclaim—you good-for-nothing fool—
 You tiresome dunce ! you vile translating tool !
 Why should such nonsense ever see the day,
 Or why such wordy nothings make display ?

'Must this be slander call'd, or honest speech ?
 No, Slander steals more softly to the breach.
 Thus, were it made a doubt, for what pretence,
 M . . . built a convent at his own expense—
 M . . . ? cries the slanderer, with a solemn whine,
 Why, don't suspect him, he's a friend of mine.
 I knew him well before his fortunes grew,
 As fine a lacquey, as e'er brush'd a shoe.
 His pious heart, and honourable mind
 Would give to God—his filchings from mankind."

'There is a sample of your sland'rer's art,
 Which stabs, with vast politeness, to the heart.
 The gen'rous soul, to such intrigues unknown,
 Detests the soft, back-biting, double tone.
 But surely, to expose a wretched verse,
 Hard as a stone, and dismal as a hearse,

To draw a line 'twixt merit and pretence,
To throttle him, who throttles common sense;
To joke a would-be wit, who wears out you,
This every reader has a right to do.

‘A fool at court may every day judge wrong,
And pass unpunish'd through the tasteless throng,
Preferring (so all standards they disturb)

²⁰Theophilus to Racan and Malherbe,
Or e'en pretend an equal price to hold
For Tasso's tinsel as for Maro's gold.

‘Some understrapper, for a dozen sous,
Who shrinks not from the scorn of publick view,
May go and take his station at the pit,

²¹And cry down Attila with vulgar wit;
Unfit the beauties of the Hun to feel,
He chides those *Vandal* verses of Corneille.

‘There's not a varlet-author in this town,
No drudge of pen and ink—no copyist clown,
Who is not ready to assume his stand,
And sternly judge all writings, scale in hand.
Soon as the anxious bard his fortune tries,
He is the slave of every dunce who buys.
He truckles low to every body's whim,
His works must combat for themselves and him.
In preface meek, he gets upon his knees,
To beg *his* candour—whom his verses tease.
In vain—no mercy let the author hope,
When even his judge stands ready with the rope.

‘And must *I* only hold my peace the while?
If men *are* fools, shall I not dare to smile?
What harm have my well-meaning verses done,
That furious authors thus against me run?
So far from filching their hard-gotten fame,
I but stepp'd in, and built them up a name.
Had not my verses brought their trash to light,
It would have sunk, long since, to hopeless night.
Where'er my friendly notice had not reach'd,
Who would have known Cotin had ever preach'd?
By Satire's dashes fools are glorious made,
As pictures owe their brilliancy to shade.
In all the honest censures I have brought,
I have but freely utter'd what I thought;

²⁰ Theophilus, it may be remembered, was a favourite of the good entertainer in the third Satire.

²¹ One of Corneille's best dramas.

And they who say I hold the rod too high,
Ev'n they in secret *think* the same as I.

‘Still some will murmur—“Sure he *was* to blame,

²² Where was the need of calling folks by name?

Attacking Chaplain too, so good a man,

²³ Whom Balzac always praises when he can!

’Tis true, had Chaplain taken my advice,

He ne’er had versified, at any price;

In rhyme, he to himself’s the worst of foes,

Oh had he always been content with prose!”

“Such is the cant in which they talk away,

But is it not the very thing *I* say?

When to his works I put my pruning-knife,

Pray do I throw rank poison on his life:

My Muse, though rough, adopts the candid plan

Still to disjoin the poet from the man:

Grant him what faith and honour are his due,

Allow him to be civil, modest, true,

Complaisant, soft, obliging, and sincere,

From me not ev’n a scruple shall you hear.

But when I see him as a model shown,

And rais’d and worshipp’d on the poet’s throne,

²⁴ Pension’d far more than wits of greater might,

My bile o’erflows, and I’m on fire to write.

If I’m forbidden what I think to say

In print—then, like the menial in the play,

I’ll go and dig the earth, and whisper there,

That ev’n the reeds may publish to the air,

Till every grove, and vale, and thicket hears,

Midas, king Midas, has an ass’s ears.

How have my writings done him any wrong?

His powers how frozen, or how chill’d his song?

Whene’er a book first takes the vender’s shelf,

Let every comer judge it for himself.

²² One day, the Abbé Victoire met Boileau, and said to him, “Chaplain is one of my friends, and I don’t like to have you call him by name in your Satires. It is true, that if he had taken my advice, he would never have written poetry. Prose is much better for his talents.” “There it is, there it is!” said our poet, “what do I say more than you? Why am I reproached for saying in verse, what every body else says in prose? I am but the Secretary of the publick.”

²³ Balzac was a nobleman, and a very popular writer of Letters. Out of about twenty of his volumes, six were filled with letters to Chaplain, and encomiums on his works.

²⁴ Chaplain had in different sinecures and pensions about eight thousand livres per annum.

²⁵ Bilaine may save it from his book-shop's dust,
Can he prevent a critick's keen disgust?

²⁶ A minister may plot against the Cid,
And every breath of rapture may forbid,
In vain, all Paris, more inform'd and wise

²⁷ Looks on Ziméné with Rodrigo's eyes.

The whole Academy may run it down—
Still shall it charm and win the rebel town.

But when a work from Chaplain's mint appears,
Straitly his readers all become Linieres.²⁸

In vain a thousand authors laud him high,
The book comes forth, and gives them all the lie.

Since then he lives the mark of scorn and glee
To the whole town—pray without chiding me,

Let him accuse his own unhappy verse,

Whereon Apollo has pronounced a curse;

Yes, blame that Muse, that led his steps astray,

His German Muse, trick'd out in French array.

Chaplain! farewell, forever and for aye!"

Satire, they tell us, is a dangerous thing;

Some smile, but most are outrag'd at its sting.

It gives its author every thing to fear,

And more than once made sorrow for Regnier;²⁹

Quit then a path, whose wily power decoys

The thoughtless soul to too ill-natur'd joys.

To themes more gentle be your Muse confin'd,

³⁰ And leave Feuillet to reform mankind.

'What! give up Satire? thwart my darling drift?

How shall I then employ my rhyming gift?

²⁵ Bilaine was a famous bookseller, who kept his shop in the grand hall of the palace.

²⁶ Corneille having obtained the representation of his famous drama of the Cid, a party was formed against it, at the head of which was the great Cardinal Richelieu, prime minister of France. He obliged the French academy to criticise that play, and their strictures were printed under the title of "Sentiments of the French Academy respecting the Cid."

²⁷ Zimene and Rodrigo—the heroine and the hero of the Cid.

²⁸ Liniere was an author who wrote severely against Chaplain's Maid of Orleans.

²⁹ Regnier was the first who wrote Satires in France. While very young, his verses provoked for him so many enemies, that his father was obliged to chastise him.

³⁰ Feuillet was a preacher excessively severe in his manners, and alarming in his exhortations. He affected singularity in his publick performances.

Pray would you have me daintily explode
My inspiration in a pretty ode ?

³¹ And vexing Danube in his course superb

Invoke his reeds with pilf'rings from Malherbe ?

³² Save groaning Zion from th' oppressor's rod,

Make Memphis tremble, and the crescent nod ?

And passing Jordan, clad in dread alarms,

Snatch (undeserv'd !) the Idumean palms ?

Or, coming with an eclogue from the rocks,

Pipe, in the midst of Paris, to my flocks,

And sitting, (at my desk,) beneath a beech,

Make Echo with my rustick nonsense screech ?

Or, in cold blood, without one spark of love

Burn to embrace some Iris from above ?

Lavish upon her every brilliant name,

Sun, Moon, Aurora, to relieve my flame ?

And while on good round fare I daily dine,

Die in a trope, or languish in a line ?

Let whining fools such affectation keep,

Whose driv'ling minds in luscious dulness sleep.

'No, no, dame Satire, chide her as you will,

Charms by her novelties and lessons still.

She only knows, in fair proportions meet,

Nicely to blend the useful with the sweet ;

And, as good sense illuminates her rhymes,

Unmasks and routs the errors of the times ;—

Dares e'en within the altar's bound to tread,

And strikes injustice, vice, and pride, with dread.

Her fearless tongue deals caustick vengeance back,

When Reason suffers from a fool's attack.

Thus by Lucilius, when his Lelius bid,

The old Cotins of Italy were chid ;

Thus Attick Horace, with his killing leers,

Brav'd and o'erwhelm'd the Roman Pelletieres.

Yes, Satire, boon companion of my way,

Has shewn me where the path of duty lay ;

For fifteen years has taught me how to look

With due abhorrence on a foolish book.

And eager o'er Parnassus as I run,

She smiles and lingers, willing to be won,

³¹ These lines allude to the writings of one Perier, who borrowed and spoilt sentences from Malherbe.

³² It is possible that in these few lines, he has alluded to Tasso's Jerusalem, whose popularity at that time, being carried too far, might have roused Boileau's jealousy for the ancients, and caused in his mind a reaction, both unfavourable and unjust to the Italian poet.

Strengthens my steps, and cheers my path with light,
In short, for her—for her, I've vow'd to write.—

“ Yet e'en this instant, if you say I must;
I'll quit her service, willing to be just.
And, if I can but quell these floods of foes,
Suppress the verse whence so much mischief rose.

Since you command—retracting I declare,

³³ *Quinault's* a Virgil! doubt it ye who dare.

³⁴ *Pradon* shines forth on these benighted times,

More like Apollo, than a thing of rhymes.

³⁵ To *Pelletiere* a higher palm is due

³⁶ Than falls to Ablancourt and his Patru ;

Cotin draws all the world to hear him preach,
And through the crowds can scarce his pulpit reach ;

³⁷ *Sofal's* the phenix of our wits of fame,
Perrin's Well done, my mind, pursue *that* game.

Yet do but see, how all the madden'd tribe

Your very praise to raillery ascribe.

Heaven knows what authors soon, inflam'd with rage,

What wounded rhymesters will the battle wage.

Soon will you see them dart th' envenom'd lie,

Whole storms of slander will against you fly,

Each verse you write be construed to a crime,

And treas'nous aims be charg'd on ev'ry rhyme.

Scarce will you dare to sound your monarch's fame,

Or consecrate your pages with his name ;

Who slights *Cotin* (if we believe *Cotin*)

Has surely done th' unpardonable sin,

A traitor to his king, his faith, his God,

Fit for the hangman, or the beadle's rod.

‘ But what ? ’ you say, ‘ can *he* do any harm ?

How has *Cotin* the power to strike alarm ?

Can he forbid, what he esteems so high,

Those pensions, which ne'er cost my heart a sigh ?

³³ Alluding to the line in the third Satire ;

“ Reason says Virgil, but rhyme says Quinault.”

³⁴ A writer of tragedies. He affected to be the rival of Racine. He was very ignorant.

³⁵ See notes on the third Satire, in the N. A. Review, for January.

³⁶ Ablancourt and Patru were very close friends ; both elegant writers.

³⁷ The author of a manuscript history of the antiquities of Paris, written in a very bombastick style. Some mortifications and disappointments prevented the author from exposing it to the world. Boileau has a cutting verse upon him in the seventh Satire.

No, no, my tongue waits not for sordid ore,
 To laud that king, whom friends and foes adore.
 Enough that I his praise may feebly speak,
 No other honour or reward I seek.
 My brush may seem capricious and severe,
 While making vice in its own swarth appear,
 Or holding up a set of fools to shame,
 Who dare to arrogate an author's name.
 Yet shall I ever treat with fond respect,
³⁸ My honoured Liege, with every virtue deck'd."
 Yes, yes, you always will, that's very well,
 But, think you, will it stop their threat'ning yell?
 "Pa. nassian yells," you say, "I little count,
 A fig for all the Hurons on the mount!"
Mon Dieu, take care, fear ev'ry thing, my mind,
 From a bad author, furiously inclin'd,
 Who, if he chuse, can.... "What?".... *I* know full well,
³⁹ "Bless me, what is it?" Hush, I must not tell.
 How fair a hand his tints should blend,
 How mild an eye on his should bend,



On seeing a Head of Raphael, elegantly copied by a young lady.

WHEN Raphael's genius gave with truth
 The pictur'd semblance of his youth,
 Had some kind Pow'r but lent his eye
 The piercing glance of prophecy,
 And shewn him through the mingled shade
 By distant climes, and ages made,

³⁸ When the eighth Satire was published, it met with extraordinary success. The king himself spoke of it several times with great praise. On one of these occasions, the Sieur de St. Mauris, of the horse-guard, told the king, that Boileau had another Satire composed, (the ninth) which was still finer than that, and in which he spoke of his Majesty. The king looked up with an air of surprise and offended dignity, and replied, 'a satire, in which he speaks of *me*, say you?' "Yes, Sire," answered St. Mauris, "but with all that respect which is due to your Majesty." The king then expressed a curiosity to see it, and when it was obtained, he admired it beyond measure, and shewed it to several ladies and others about court. This was contrary to Boileau's wishes; but when the poem was so much circulated, that there was danger of a defective copy getting abroad, he resolved to publish it. "Thus," says the commentator, to whom we owe this story, "it may in a manner be said, that this piece came to the public, through the hands of the king."

³⁹ All the commentators have left these closing lines in the dark. Perhaps Boileau, too, meant to leave his readers as much perplexed as he did his own mind.